

. Nature out of account, have failed to give any rational account of his conduct, more particularly in reference to religion: and as they felt their incompetency, they have burst out into empty declamations against superstition and fanaticism, and have lost their own temper in ridiculing human infirmity. We cannot explain human folly under certain of its modifications—we cannot explain human folly even by human passion—we cannot understand the particular mode and intensity of human wickedness—we are puzzled at every step, till we call in a perverted moral sense. It is by the help of this, the most singular part of man's nature, that we are enabled to account for all other singularities and anomalies of his spiritual constitution.

Man's fallen, like his original, nature is a deep and a complex one. There are other sins and passions besides those low and base ones into which vulgar minds would resolve every principle of man's heart. Some can discover nothing in man's actuating motives but the love of money, others nothing but the love of praise, and a third class, apparently more profound, resolve all into a refined and far-sighted self-love. These contracted views of narrow minds and suspicious hearts are utterly inadequate to explain the mysteries of the human soul. The lusts and pleasures of the human heart are very numerous, and assume an infinite variety of forms. There may be much sinfulness where there is no selfishness. The very attempts which these men make to find such low motives for human action, indicate how inadequate are their views of the true nature of virtue: for they as much as say, that if they could meet with real kindness and amiability in the world, they would be completely satisfied, though there were no godliness and no moral principle. We include all men under sin, not by seeking to debase the human character lower than it is, but by exalting the standard of virtue

—not higher than it ought to be—but by making it such as God hath ordained it in our very constitution.

Not only are these two views, which we may call the selfish and the evangelical, different in themselves—they are different also in their practical influence. The tendency of the one is to render each man satisfied with himself, and suspicious of those with whom he comes in contact. The tendency of the other is to humble every man in his own estimation, and prompt him to use all available means to elevate a race that has sunk to such